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Eid al-Fitr 1447 – Courage to refuse empire



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As we gather to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, we do so in a world trembling under the weight of war, dispossession, and deepening injustice. Ramadan has trained our souls in restraint, discipline, and compassion. Eid now asks: What have we learned? And how will we live what we have learned?

Across our globe, we witness powerful states arrogating to themselves the right to decide which governments may stand and which must fall. The language is often dressed in the garments of “security,” “stability,” or even “liberation.” But history teaches us a sobering truth: regime change imposed through military force violates international law. It rarely brings freedom. Instead, it advances imperial ambitions, strengthens authoritarian narratives, entrenches cycles of violence, and multiplies human suffering. In the process, it suffocates indigenous, justice-centered movements struggling for authentic emancipation.

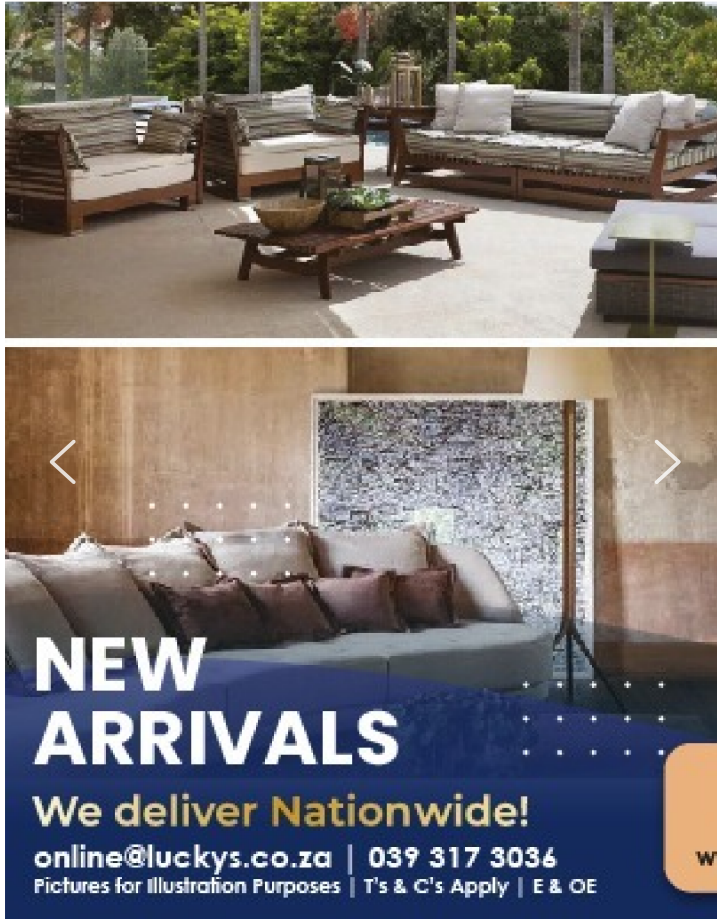
As Muslims shaped by the ethical discipline of Ramadan, we must resist the seduction of simplistic narratives. The Qur’an commands us: *“Believers!, stand firmly for justice, as witnesses for God, even against yourselves...”* (Qur’an 4:135)

Justice is not selective. It is not partisan. It does not excuse external aggression because we oppose a particular regime, nor does it romanticize authoritarian rulers simply because they resist foreign powers. Our moral compass must be steadied by principle, not by geopolitical convenience or sectarian prejudices.

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Ramadan has reminded us that transformation begins within. Fasting is not only abstention from food and drink; it is an act of moral reorientation. It teaches us *sabr* (steadfast perseverance), *taqwa* (God-consciousness), and *rahma* (compassion and mercy). These are not private virtues alone. They are public ethics. Eid, therefore, is not an escape from the world's pain. It is a recommitment to healing it.

In the past decades, we have seen the catastrophic consequences of wars waged in the name of "liberation." Entire societies have been fractured. Sectarian divisions have deepened. Millions have been displaced. The architecture of international law has been eroded by double standards and selective enforcement.

As conscientious believers, we must reject both the violence of empire and the violence of tyranny. Our beloved exemplar, Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him), stood against oppression in all its forms. He taught that the best *jihad* is a word of truth spoken before a tyrannical ruler (Sunan al-Nasa'i; also reported in Sunan Abu Dawud, and Jami' al-Tirmidhi). In our time, that includes speaking against unlawful wars, economic strangulation through unjust sanctions, and collective punishment of civilian populations. It also includes challenging corruption, repression, and abuses of power within our own societies.

Eid al-Fitr is a festival of gratitude. We thank God for the gift of life, for the strength to fast, for the bonds of family and community. But gratitude must also deepen into social responsibility. What might this responsibility look like?



First, we must cultivate moral clarity. We refuse the false choice between empire and despotism. We affirm instead the dignity of

people to determine their own futures without external coercion.

Second, we must nurture compassionate solidarity. The Qur'an describes the believers as a single body: when one part suffers, the whole body feels the pain. Let our zakat, our advocacy, our scholarship, and our civic engagement reflect this global moral consciousness.

Third, we must invest in justice-centred peacebuilding. Sustainable peace cannot be built through bombs and occupation. It grows from within societies, through accountable institutions, inclusive governance, economic fairness, and respect for human rights. External actors who truly wish to help must support these indigenous processes rather than impose their own geopolitical designs.

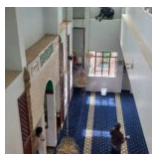
Finally, we must guard our hearts. Anger at injustice must not curdle into hatred. Opposition to aggression must not become dehumanisation. Ramadan has softened our hearts through fasting, night vigil prayers, Qur'an recitation, and alms giving. Eid invites us to carry that tenderness into the public square.

The takbir of Eid—*Allahu Akbar* (God is Greater Than) is not a slogan of triumphalism. It is a proclamation that no empire, no army, no ruler is ultimate. God alone is the Greatest. All power is accountable. No oppression will escape its reckoning.

As we embrace one another and say *Eid Mubarak*, let us also renew our covenant with the Lord of Compassion and Mercy to stand for justice without fear, to speak truth without rancour, and to work for a world in which freedom is not delivered by missiles but cultivated through compassion, the rule of law, and human dignity.

May this Eid be a turning point for our hearts and for our world. Eid Mubarak.

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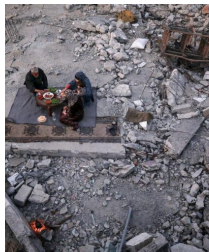
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